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THURSDAY, July 24, 2025

The Courier Leader

75¢

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Paw Paw Days to be held this weekend

PAW PAW - The Paw Paw Area Chamber of Commerce will present its annual Paw Paw Days Classic Car & Truck Show, Arts & Crafts marketplace, Kids Zone, Touch-A-Truck, music, food, and more, Friday, July 25 and Saturday, July 26.

The event has traditionally brought to the downtown thousands of visitors who shop, eat and explore the Paw Paw community.

On Friday, at 6, classic car owners may join in the Carole Motycka Memorial Cruise. The caravan lines up at Tractor Supply, on the corner of S. M-40 and County Road 665 and follows a pre-determined route through the countryside surrounding Paw Paw. Drivers will return to the village at Red's Root Beer Stand for food and car talk.

On Saturday, the car show and Marketplace will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration begins at 7 a.m. at the registration table near the entrance to the Van Buren County Park in downtown Paw Paw. Cars will be displayed along Michigan Avenue in the Central Business District. Car show exhibitors should enter only at the corners of Michigan Avenue and Gremps Street, or N. Niles and Oak streets."

Saturday's activities include:

- Arts and crafts and other vendors in the downtown park;
- A "food court" on Paw Paw Street featuring Scott's Pig Roast, Sweet T's, Kurbside Catering, and B&D Kettlecorn;
- Desi's Tropical Sno Shack on Michigan Avenue in front of the Village Hall;
- Sloppy Joes at the Masonic Lodge on E. Michigan Avenue;
- KidsZone games and activities hosted by Freshwater Community Church in the Paw Paw Township Hall parking lot;
- Touch-A-Truck display of heavy equipment and emergency vehicles for kids to explore on Michigan Avenue;
- Giant Jenga, Cornhole and inflatable football games offered by U.S. Air Force Recruiters on Paw Paw Street;
- Sidewalk sales and other weekend specials at Paw Paw's downtown businesses;
- Music, 50/50 raffle, car show trophies and other fun stuff.

To make a weekend of it, come back Sunday for the village's Farmers Market from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Paw Paw Township Hall, and the DDA's free concert at the amphitheatre featuring Memphis Underground from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Information is available at www.pawpawdays.com.

Good Trouble Rally draws over 300 to march and sing-along

Marchers Walk across the Michigan Avenue bridge during the Good Trouble Lives, held Thursday, July 17 in Paw Paw.

Photo courtesy/Ann Burch

By Ann Burch

PAW PAW - Reminiscent of the 1950s and 1960s era, folk music streamed from the Maple Lake Amphitheatre stage last Thursday evening, July 17, during the Good Trouble Lives On Rally in Paw Paw.

Conducted by Fred Sang, the Fred and the Good Trouble Troubadours performed for over 300 participants who joined into the sing-along, listened to speakers, and marched through downtown Paw Paw and back across the Michigan Avenue bridge to the amphitheater. Hosted by Indivisible Paw Paw, the rally was in honor of Congressman and civil rights leader John Lewis, who passed away five years ago on July 17.

"Songs of social significance were a part of the time, and the music raised awareness of and resistance to the Vietnam War," said Sang, who is the former director of the Kalamazoo Children's Chorus. "These songs reflect a period of social and political unrest. They remind listeners of the role music can play in challenging injustice, advocating for equality, and promoting peace."

Indivisible Paw Paw collected more than $1,000 in donations during the rally for the Mi Casa, SuCasa program at the Paw Paw/Decatur First Presbyterian Churches. The program welcomes area migrant workers by furnishing their dwellings with household necessities.

Events coordinator Anne Hawkinson welcomed everyone and then recapped her own family's immigration story.

"My grandparents were immigrants from Japan in the early 20th century. Like many other Japanese and Chinese immigrants, they settled on the west coast in California. There they were banned from citizenship, but their children became birthright citizens," said Hawkinson, describing what was called the 'yellow peril' that severely limited the lives of Japanese American families.

"Soon after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941and President Franklin Roosevelt signed executive order 9066, which sent my mother, her siblings and her parents, along with 120,000 other west coast Japanese to inland internment camps," Hawkinson added. "Roosevelt did not act in a vacuum. Populist fear and hatred were at the root of this removal, fueled by sensationalist rhetoric such as that spread by Randolph Hearst's newspaper empire."

Keynote speaker for the event was Dr. Regina Nelson, a professor of Early Childhood Education at Western Michigan University. Nelson spoke of the "transformative power of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" within the education system.

"I see first-generation college students like me discovering their voice and embracing their unique potential. I see students of color finally being recognized, validated, and celebrated for who they are through culturally diverse curriculum materials and teachers who reflect their diversity," Nelson said.

"We've observed the current administration issuing executive orders that dismantle DEI by deliberately eliminating funding for critical equity programs, which provide essential support to students living in poverty. We are witnessing a wave of book bans, curriculum restrictions, and efforts to conceal the truth about our country's past.

"We must stand firm against them and make good trouble, just like John Lewis taught us. And in his words, "Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part."

Other speakers included Kerria Randolph, program manager and student trainer with ARCUS Center For Social Justice at Kalamazoo College.

"We gather here at a pivotal moment. John Lewis didn't just participate in history; he made it. He understood, deeply, that progress isn't handed to us; it's fought for, marched for, and sometimes, it's about getting into 'good trouble,' Randolph said. A concept that's more relevant than ever. "It's a simple phrase, yet it carries profound meaning and a powerful call to action."

Randolph explained to those gathered that a call to action means to do something. He said, people can educate themselves and then they can find their voice and use it. Thirdly, they can get involved.

"Perhaps most importantly, be courageous. It takes courage to stand up for what's right, especially when it's unpopular or difficult. But remember the legacy of John Lewis: courage isn't the absence of fear, but the triumph over it."

Other speakers were Mariah Bryant from Michigan's Voter Not Politicians who spoke on VNP's campaign to educate voters on ballot petitions that would rewrite parts of the state Constitution; Nadine Rios talked about the Rank Choice Voting initiative;

Paw Paw man arrested for possession of child sexually abusive material

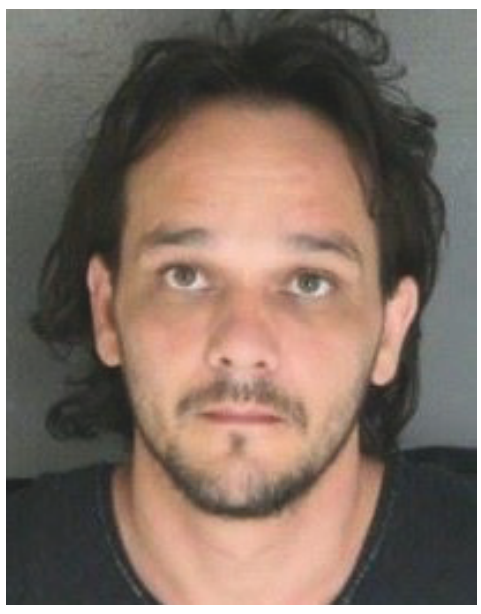
PAW PAW – Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott reported that on July 9, at approximately 7 a.m., the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division, assisted by the Michigan State Police Computer Crimes Unit/Internet Crimes Against Children Taskforce, executed a search warrant in the 37000 block of County Road 665 in Waverly Township.

The search warrant was a result of an investigation into a tip that was forwarded to the sheriff's office. A 35-year-old male suspect was suspected of being in possession of child sexually abusive material.

Upon execution of the search warrant, the male suspect was located at the residence. Numerous electronic devices were in the residence and seized because of the investigation. The male suspect was arrested as a result of the investigation and faces numerous criminal charges as a result of the investigation for possession of child sexually abusive material and using a computer to commit a felony.

The investigation is ongoing, and the sheriff's office is working in conjunction with the Michigan State Police Internet Crimes against Children Taskforce. Anyone with information regarding the investigation is asked to contact the Van Buren County Sheriff's Office.

On July 11, suspect Travis Lane, 35, of Paw Paw, was arraigned in the 7th East District Court on the following charges stemming from this investigation:



1. Child sexually abusive activity-aggravated
2. Computers- using to commit a crime- maximum imprisonment 20+ years
3. Child sexually abusive activity-aggravated
4. Computers- using to commit a crime- maximum imprisonment 20+ years
5. Child sexually abusive material-aggravated possession
6. Computers- using to commit a crime- prison 10-20 years
7. Child sexually abusive material-aggravated possession
8. 8. Computers- using to commit a crime - prison 10-20 years

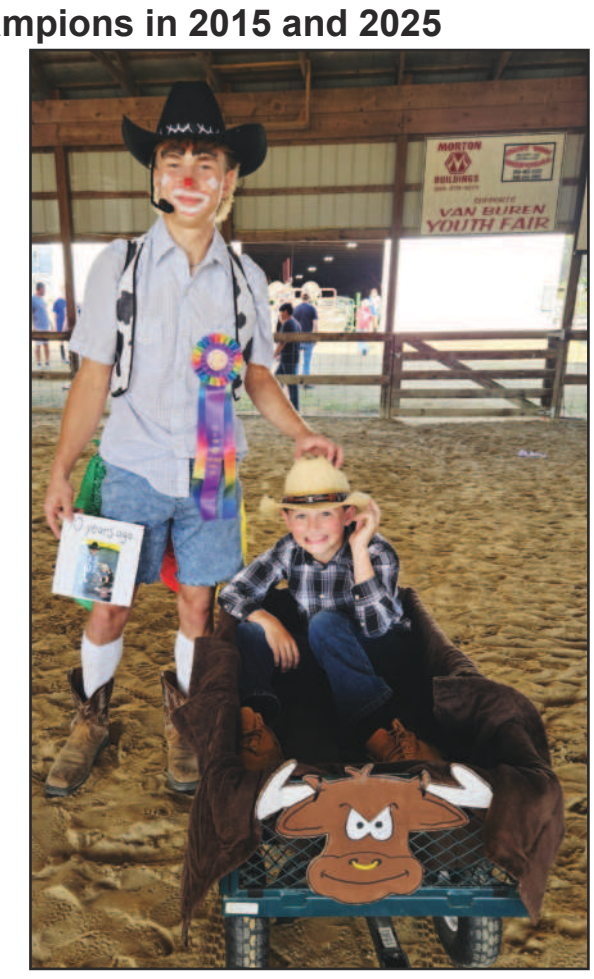
Paw Paw youth is multi fair award winner

Wyatt Buskirk, 12, of Paw Paw, took several awards last week at the Van Buren Yoth Fair. The awards included, Grand Champion Dairy Heifer, Grand Champion Dairy Cow, Reserve Grand Champion Heavyweight Feeder, Reserve Grand Champion Crossbred Feeder, Grand Champion Crossbred Steer and Top Showmanship Young 2 Dairy. The chair was received for the Grand Champion Crossbred Rate of Gain. In second photo, Buskirk is shown with Tom Pursley, of Paw Paw, who purchased Buskirk's Grand Champion Crossbred Steer.

Courtesy photo
Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

YOUTH FAIR CONCLUDES, MANY WIN AWARDS

Youth Parade Grand Champions in 2015 and 2025



Cousins Dane Ostlund of Schoolcraft and Blake Saidla, of Lawton, first entered the Youth Parade at the Van Buren Youth Fair in 2015 at age 7 and 10-months-old. This year, they decided to recreate their entry. Ten years later they were awarded Grand Champion again. Both have been members of the Porter Busy Fingers 4-H Club for many years.

Courtesy photos

Small Animal Showmanship Sweepstakes Award Winners

Reagan Martin, left, a member of the Shamrock Shakers 4-H club, was named Junior Showman at the Small Animal Sweepstakes Award Show, held Friday, July 18, at the Van Buren Youth Fair. Makayla King, right, a member of the Almena Happy Helpers 4-H club, was named the Senior Showman..

Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

The Michigan Horse Pulling Boat Association, held Saturday, July 19, at the Van Buren Youth Fair, saw several teams compete.

Photo courtesy/John Garrod

Large Animal Showmanship Sweepstakes Award Winners

Shelbi Rindfield, left, was named Senior Showman winner at the Large Livestock Jr./Sr. Showmanship Sweepstakes, while Molly Kubiszak, right, was named Junior Showman. The event was held Saturday, July 19, at the Van Buren Youth Fair.

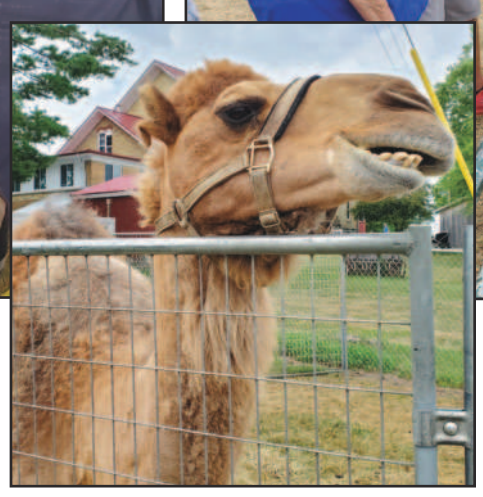
Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

Local Talent Shines at Van Buren Youth Fair

Local talent was on display last week during the Van Buren Youth Fair. Vineyard Chicks, Kayla, Trie and Bunkie, a three-sister music group, from Lawrence, provided music under the Community Tent on Monday, July 14. Abel Munoz, of Bangor, performed a set of songs during the Fair Fiesta Extravaganza, held Wednesday, July 16. Comedy magician, Trino, of Grand Rapids, MI, a Paw Paw High School graduate, performed magic tricks Wednesday through Saturday at the fair.

Courier-Leader photos/Paul Garrod

Exotic Animals on display at fair



Whispering Pines' exotic animals were on display last week, July 14 -19, at the Van Buren Youth Fair. Fairgoers had the opportunity to see a variety of animals, including cattle, goats, an alligator, and a camel, among others.

Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

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2ND FRONT PAGE

Two escape unharmed from trailer fire

The two occupants of a house trailer in Bangor Township of Van Buren County safely evacuated their residence when fire swept through it early Sunday morning. Firefighters from Bangor Community FD, Columbia Township, Covert Township and South Haven Area Emergency Services responded to the 5:02 a.m. alarm on County Road 687. The structure was fully engulfed in flames upon arrival. Awakened by smoke, the occupants said they discovered fire around a window air conditioner. They safely evacuated along with a family dog. A second dog perished in the fire. Photos courtesy South Haven Area Emergency Services

School Board hires Athletic Director, seeks new principal

Chris Gerlach

By James Windell

The South Haven Board of Education filled one of two vacancies when it voted to hire Chris Gerlach as South Haven's new Athletic Director. However, the Board is under a time crunch to find a principal for the high school following the recent resignation of Joe Allen.

Gerlach was officially approved by the School Board at its meeting on July 16, 2025. Gerlach comes to South Haven following two years as the Athletic Director and Dean of Students at Quincy High School. Gerlach replaces former Athletic Director Brock Thumm, who resigned in June, 2025 to become the K-12 principal in Lawrence, Michigan.

In an open letter to the Quincy School District, Gerlach said that the move to become the fulltime Athletic Director with South Haven Public Schools represents a professional opportunity for him as well as a personal opportunity for his family. He noted that he and his wife are expecting their first child and the South Haven job will put them closer to family as they begin the next chapter in their lives.

Joe Allen, who was the South Haven High School principal for the 2024-2025 school year, recently accepted the position of Superintendent of Schools for Covert Public Schools.

South Haven School Superintendent, Ana Aleman-Putman said after the School Board meeting that the call for job applications for a new high school principal would be posted as soon as July 17.

"Then we will need a committee of parents, staff members, and community members to review applications conduct interviews," she said. "I want everyone's voices included in this selection, including student voices."

Although Aleman-Putman was not certain how long the process would take she does not want to rush it. "I want to give people a good opportunity to turn in an application," she emphasized. "I don't want to rush because I want to make sure we have the perfect candidate for the school. I want to make sure that the staff, the students and the community feels comfortable that we have found the right person for us."

The Superintendent said that if a new principal is not hired before the beginning of the year, she would become more active at the high school.

"If we don't have a principal by the time school begins, then I will be at the high school to help people get started and help out with the staffing issues."

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Pullman Pride gathered the community to fill scholarship coffers

By Gari Voss

Pullman Pride Day on Saturday, July 19, 2025, brought the community together to enjoy a variety of activities while gathering dollars that would be added to the Dee Wesbey Scholarship Fund.

Residents and visitors could begin their day with breakfast at the Lee Township Fire Hall then stop at the Pullman Town Square and learn about Allegan County Lakeshore Cleanup, purchase crafts, listen to music, or buy homemade goods. Down 56th Street, the Car Show took front and center at the Linking Center, youngsters played on the playground equipment, seniors enjoyed a meal and conversation, and later in the day, everyone could get out of the heat to enjoy a movie.

Throughout the middle of the day, Joan Laraway made sure that people voted for the Cutest Baby, "old timers" shared stories at the museum, senior enjoyed a free lunch at the Linking Center while children enjoyed creating crafts and adults wandered through the cars on display. For the sports minded, there was disc golf behind Pullman School before the Corn Hole Tournament began at the VFW Hall.

The Linking Center parking lot brought young and old to admire the many cars and trucks on display for the Pullman Pride Day, July 19, 2025. Photo: G. Voss

A special thank you to the organizing committee and all who participated to ensure that seniors graduating in 2026 have an opportunity to receive scholarships for their post-high school endeavors.

Joan Laraway organized the Cutest Baby Contest with proceeds going for scholarships to assist high school graduates with college expenses. Photo: G. Voss

The Pullman Town Square was filled with arts, crafts, food and music during Pullman Pride Day on Sat., July 19, 2025. Proceeds from activities like the Cutest Baby Contest, Breakfast at the Lee Township Fire Station, the Corn Hole Tournament and vendors were donated to the Dee Wesbey Scholarship Fund. Photo: G. Voss

Allegan County Lakeshore Cleanup was on hand to share their work throughout the county. The workers were originally organized by Jim Dyer the cleanup the Allegan County shoreline and rural roads. The message was to support their efforts to minimize gas, dumping, and supply fees. All are invited to assist in maintaining trash-free roads and shorelines. They utilize these donations to offset fuel fees and dumping expenses. A drop-off container is located at 3549 115th Avenue, Allegan, MI. Alternatively, schedule a pickup by calling 269-650-0654. They are grateful to everyone who assists with cleanup and to Cheshire, Lee, and Trowbridge Townships that assist in covering the costs associated with disposing of the bags of garbage. They believe that community support is crucial to their continued efforts, and together, we can preserve the beauty of Allegan County. Allegan County Lake Shore Clean Up. Photo: G. Voss

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South Haven museum receives new coat of paint

The historic Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum in South Haven is receiving a complete top-to-bottom paint job. Constructed in 1853 and one of the oldest remaining residential structures in South Haven, the museum on Bailey Avenue is the birthplace and childhood home of Dr. Liberty Hyde Bailey, Jr., internationally recognized horticulturist. A national historic site, it is maintained by the City of South Haven. The paint job, approved recently by the City Council, is costing $37,500.

Photos by Tom Renner

Lawton Village Council reviews 2024-2025 audit

LAWTON - At the July 8 Lawton Village Council meeting, the 2024-2025 village audit was discussed.

Lawton Village Manager Todd Hackenberg provided an overview of the audit, which shows the village's overall financial health has improved significantly.

The village's total net worth is up $3.6 million from the previous year, which includes money in the bank, property, equipment, roads, and infrastructure.

According to Village Manager Hackenberg, most of the increase came from grants and infrastructure upgrades. He also provided an audit summary of individual accounts, as well as what was bought/built for the previous year, and outstanding debt in the sewer fund.

Village Council President Appleby brought a quote from Hydrocorp for $48,157.04 over five years, to the floor for discussion.

After the sanitary survey, EGLE said there were some updates that the village needed to make. The village must also audit residential areas in the village.

With 492 water services, and four Department of Public Works (DPW) employees, it is more cost effective for the village to hire out a company to do this. That company would do all inspections, audits, public education, and reports.

Village Manager Hackenberg said that hiring this company would be more cost effective than hiring one full-time person who solely handled this.

He also said being a water cost, this would come entirely out of the water fund.

Council member Judith Peterson made a motion that the Village of Lawton implement a cross-connection control inspection program through Hydrocorp over the next five years for $48,157.04. It was seconded by Gail Dudek. The council, in a roll call vote, approved the motion.

Village President Appleby brought the village blight ordinance: grass section updates to the floor for discussion. Police Chief Cordes said the grass ordinance needs to be updated. The Lawton Police Department has attempted to go out and tag high grass houses. However, between staffing shortages and rain expediting the weed growth process, he has been going out tagging homes. Per the Village of Lawton ordinance Police Chief Cordes has to send a certified letter 10 days after tagging a home. Certified letters rarely ever get compliance according to Police Chief Cordes, and at $5.50 per letter, it has drained the police department's entire stamp budget. He said it doesn't make sense to him that the village grass ordinance is the way that it is. He said the police department is already tagging the home. He said the village does not provide tickets for any other tickets. Police Chief Cordes would like to see providing a notice, even if it is on bright paper, and then, have it go to the contractor in order to have the grass mowed.

Council member Eric Dudek agreed if it is not working, it needs to be changed. Dudek suggested after one warning per year, issue a ticket. According to Dudek, some homes are vacant, and don't live on site. The end goal is to try to get the grass cut, according to Dudek. His theory is to make it a streamlined system, either they take care of their grass, or the village would take care of it for them and charge it to their taxes.

Village Council President Appleby said that according to legal advice, without proper notice, it was trespassing, so it may be more of a process. Appleby suggested having the village look into other ways to accomplish this. He also said to seek out information from other municipalities.

Council member Eric Dudek questioned whether a part of this problem could already be addressed via a rental ordinance.

South Haven seeks citizen input on economic plan

By James Windell

What does South Haven do better than any other city? What are the strengths of South Haven that could lead to economic expansion?

Those are the kinds of questions economic development consultant James Hettinger will be asking city residents at two listening and input sessions scheduled on Wednesday, July 30 and Tuesday, August 26, 2025. The sessions are scheduled at the South Haven City Hall from 5:00 to 7:00 pm on both days.

A previous Economic Strategic Plan was developed in 2020, however, Hettinger says that the COVID-19 pandemic limited the number of citizens who could provide input at that time.

"In 2019 and 2020, I was hired by the city to do a strategic economic development plan," Hettinger said in a recent interview, "and at that time we were concerned about the long-term impact of the pandemic and also the decommissioning of the Palisades Nuclear Power plant. Now the plan needs to be updated."

Hettinger brings to South Haven more than 34 years of experience in assisting communities with community and economic development opportunities. He served as the President of Battle Creek Unlimited, a private, nonprofit corporation that has helped people and businesses find ways to create economic opportunity in Southwest Michigan, from 1979 to 2009. Currently, Hettinger is a consultant to economic development programs across the country. He also sits on the editorial board of a scholarly economic development journal (Economic Development Quarterly: The Journal of Economic Revitalization), keeping him in touch with the latest research findings.

"In the past few years," Hettinger said, "the issue of housing has skyrocketed to the top of the list of critical issues. South Haven is in the position today that the people who want to live in the community can't because of the cost of housing. One of the things I would like to learn from people is to find out if it is possible for us to develop a housing strategy."

During the first scheduled meeting, Hettinger explained that he will be going through the previous economic strategy to find out where there were mistakes in 2020 and how the City can learn more about the issues around housing. "Can we find a way with public input to come up with a strategy that is acceptable to the South Haven City Council that will also be acceptable to the community?" Hettinger asked.

Going back to the questions of what South Haven does better than any other cities, Hettinger said that if the City can identify and answer that question, then it can focus on the City's strengths. "Once you identify what it does better than any other city, " he said, "you can grow that in terms of becoming a comparative advantage. We can make sure we continue to do that better than any competing community."

Hettinger acknowledged that the competition between cities can be "ferocious." However, he added: "There is a place for communities like South Haven in this competition. I would just like to know from people what they perceive as our strengths and our competencies."

The first "Listen and Input" meeting will be in the City Hall's Council Chambers, 539 Phoenix Street, South Haven on Wednesday, July 30 at 5:00 pm.

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VIEWPOINT

"Pay It Forward" Is a Powerful Idea Worth Embracing

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX ■ PUBLISHER ■

In a world often overshadowed by cynicism, economic struggle, and divisive headlines, the simple idea of "paying it forward" offers a powerful counterbalance. It's a concept built on selflessness—doing something kind for someone else without expecting anything in return, trusting that the good will continue its journey. While it may sound idealistic, the ripple effect of one good deed can be transformative—not just for individuals, but for entire communities

I was the recipient of an act of selflessness this past weekend, and I'm still in awe that it happened. My fiancé and I were attending a big city movie theatre to see a film we were both interested in. We went to the kiosk and purchased our tickets and then headed to concessions to get a large popcorn, coke and beer.

The total came to about $40, and because I was struggling carrying my beer (I have essential tremor which means my hands shake horribly), the teenage attendant said, "I got this, you don't have to pay." I was flabbergasted. Here is a teenager paying for our refreshments. I said, "you don't have to do that." But he insisted. He said he had manager status and was able to pay for others a couple times a day.

I won't soon forget this and will be quick to pay it forward to others.

At its core, paying it forward is an act of generosity. It might be covering a stranger's coffee, mowing a neighbor's lawn, or donating supplies to a struggling school. These seemingly small gestures carry a disproportionate weight. They remind us that empathy and kindness still exist, even among strangers. In a society that too often encourages competition and individualism, paying it forward reintroduces the value of community and shared humanity.

Importantly, this principle fosters a cycle of goodwill. When people receive an unexpected act of kindness, they are more likely to feel inspired to help others in turn. Psychologists call this "moral elevation"—a warm feeling that encourages prosocial behavior. One kind gesture becomes two, then four, then more. It's exponential generosity.

There's also a practical side to all this. Paying it forward helps build social capital. When communities are rooted in mutual respect and helpfulness, they function better. People are more likely to look out for one another, cooperate, and solve problems together. Neighborhoods feel safer. Schools thrive. Local economies improve as trust builds between people and businesses.

Critics might say that acts of kindness are no match for systemic problems. And while it's true that paying it forward won't solve inequality or injustice overnight, it contributes to a healthier social climate. Grassroots goodness can complement top-down reform. If we want to build a more compassionate society, we need both.

Ultimately, paying it forward is about hope. It's about believing in the idea that one person's actions matter, and that we all have the capacity to make life a little better for someone else. In times of division, that's a lesson worth spreading.

So next time someone holds the door, covers your lunch, or offers a hand without asking for credit, don't just say thank you. Pass it on. The world could use more of that. I know I will.

Life as Performance Art

G CORWIN STOPPEL

"History doesn't always repeat itself but it often rhymes," said Mark Twain. As I write this in mid-July, it looks like there will be a change. For better or worse, I'm not sure.

A wonderful thing about a firmly-established republic or republican-democracy government form is that leaders can legally be replaced peacefully with ballots instead of bullets.

Our U.S, Constitution spells out the length of a politician's term: Two years for a representative, four for a president with an option to renew, and six for a senator. Add to or subtract from that term limits established by some states.

Other countries have their own systems. In Canada and England, prime ministers are elected for a 5-year terms but if things are going well, he or she can call for an election before the end of the five years. Even so, sooner or later, they get the proverbial sheet cake and are replaced.

Greece and Italy constantly hold elections because their leader never has a solid majority and must create a coalition government of several parties. It works out for a short time, then they squabble.

Think of it in terms of sports teams that constantly fire managers and coaches and replace them with someone new. With it comes the eternal hope that this time things will be better.

When ballots are used instead of bullets, the world rarely waits in fear and apprehension. We just shrug, hope we can pronounce the name of the new office holder and that he or she will be a good one.

Winston Churchill once said politics is messy and democracy is its messiest form, but it gives people the best chance to live in freedom and peace.

Turnover in autocracies rarely ends well. Tyranny begets more tyranny and bloodshed. Two examples from the last century, Russia and Germany, illustrate this cycle.

The Romanovs, czars of Russia since the 1600s, became increasingly abusive, repressive and out of touch with the lives of their subjects. Joining them in this abuse was the Russian Orthodox Church.

Not surprisingly, there were assassination attempts on the czars and bishops, some of which succeeded, followed by even more repression. Then in 1914, Russia was caught up in World War I.

Their first engagement with the Germans, at the Battle of Tannenberg, was a fiasco for the Russians. Almost half a million soldiers were killed or captured, and the rest hastily retreated. The defeat was demoralizing for the civilians, made the more so by inflation, conscription and shortages.

The situation was ripe for Lenin to lead the Communist Revolution. In 1917, the Romanovs were arrested, exiled and executed. Lenin became the new leader. Sort of.

Lenin faced many opposition groups and armies, and Trotsky was put in charge of the Red Army to deal with them. Soon Trotsky became dangerous because he had power and knew too much.

When Lenin died in 1924, perhaps pushed along by Stalin, Stalin knew he had to get of his rival Trotsky. At first, he was exiled to Siberia, then his citizenship was revoked and he fled the country.

Though exiled, Trotsky stayed in touch with the Russian officer corps. Stalin perceived them as a danger and began executing officers and enlisted people. The result were the purges and show trials of the 1930s.

As for Trotsky, Stalin sent his thugs who whacked him with ice picks in Mexico — the better to warn people that he had power well beyond Russia. Soon Stalin feared the judges and executioners, so he liquidated them. The pattern continued until Stalin died following a stroke.

After chaos and confusion, Khrushchev gained absolute power and, to better cover his tracks, he ordered the execution of Beria and other high-ranking officials from Stalin's government. Others were given a one-way rail, unheated boxcar class, ticket to Siberia.

Although Germany's Hitler was legally elected to office, he relied heavily on two different groups to keep him in power.

On one side was the giant military-industrial-banker complex. Opposite them were his street thugs, the SA, better known as the Brownshirts, led by Ernst Rohm.

These brawlers took sadistic delight in hurting others, especially Jews, socialists, LBGTQ people and foreigners. The more the Nazis trampled the rights of "outsiders," the more popular they became.

By the early summer of 1934 the Brownshirts were so successful, Hitler saw them as a threat. He changed on June 30 to July 2 in what became known as the "Night of the Long Knives." Several hundred Brownshirts were murdered by the SS and others. Then, within 35 days, Germany transformed from a republic into a dictatorship.

We know the ultimate results of the policies of these two tyrants, as well as their own ends. It all happened because of anger, jealousy and greed. We can learn from them.

First, every successful tyrant has to have an obedient group of followers willing to make him their demigod. They must be united in their belief that their political hero is wise, never makes a mistake, and must always be obeyed because he is the smartest man in the world.

When Stalin addressed the Supreme Soviet, his loyalists applauded until he gave permission to stop. Anyone who did not last the 10 or more minutes was soon picked up in the middle of the night by men in black coats and were on their way to a gulag.

Second lesson for wanna-be dictators is there must always be one sneaky, no-good enemy trying to destroy him and his subjects. Stalin had Trotsky and other high-ranking officials; Hitler had Stalin, could point to Russians as dangerous communists, then claim he alone could stop them.

Number three, tyrants never run out of potential enemies. The Bavarian corporal understood that. He went after the LBGTQ communities, the mentally ill, the severely handicapped, trade unionists, Lutherans, Catholics and Jews. Once his army crossed into Eastern Europe, he turned the worst of his thugs on the Slavs. They followed orders and rounded them up for either deportation or execution.

As Twain pointed out, history doesn't always perfectly repeat itself, but it does rhyme. Our democracy will always going to be messy and fragile, but we must always stand up to tyrants at home or abroad who seek to destroy it and our freedoms.

County Museum holds car and tractor show

The Van Buren County Museum recently held a car and tractor show. More than 30 cars and 15 tractors took part in the event, held on the museum grounds, located midway between Hartford and Lawrence. The event served as a fundraiser for the more than 40-room museum. Courier-Leader photos/Paul Garrod

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Reader encourages traditional Dems to join GOP

Dear Editor,

I'd like to congratulate the Van Buren County Youth Fair Board and staff on a successful 2025. On Sunday I was told by one of the fair employees that Friday's attendance broke all previous records. It's heartening to see families and our community still embracing the county fair.

I have assisted with the Van Buren County GOP fair booth for the last few years and have noticed an interesting occurrence. While discussing our daily booth activities it seems that at some time throughout the week one or more people from the VBC Democrat's booth will come to visit us. Most will simply disparage the Republican Party with the usual petulant uniformed diatribe. But occasionally someone in a blue Democrat shirt will come over with a sincere question concerning a certain Republican position. By and large these individuals, when provided with reasonable and factual information, will at the very least recognize the logic in the GOP position and sometimes even agree.

Democrats and Republicans have been at odds on many significant issues for the past some 171 years. Yet by and large the Democrat Party was never anti-American. The new Democrat Party is now primarily funded by international enemies as well as some wealthy Americans looking to see the United States fail and become just another secular, dictatorial one-world entity. This only reinforces the fact that the Democrat Party has indeed been hijacked by the anti-American progressive left and has abandoned traditional Democrats.

It's been pathetic enough to witness the recent nonsensical rantings and tantrums of the mostly geriatric protesters. Now they are inviting children to learn to make protest signs and attending their petty, hate filled protests. Our worlds history is inundated with groups who indoctrinate children to support a destructive political agenda and it has never worked out well for that society or the children. Simply look at North Korea, China, the Congo, Somalia and too many other tragic examples to list. Kids should be allowed to be kids and adults should never employ them as pawns for their political or social schemes.

Our Republican and Democrat parties have evolved very separately over the past fifty some years. Despite all the failings of the Republican Party it has evolved into quite a large tent. Regardless of the issue; abortion, 2nd Amendment, drug legalization, gender, taxation or any number of matters you will find Republicans with various and often differing views. Christian, Jew, Muslim or atheist matter less than the preservation of our republic as it was created by our founders. The new Democrat Party has taken another far more insidious path far from the principles of John F. Kennedy and Harry S. Truman.

We now witness these new Democrats displaying our Constitution, Bill of Rights or Declaration of Independence and displaying the American flag while intentionally misrepresenting our nation as a democracy rather than the republic which it is. They cherry pick specific line items of our founding documents while criticizing our founders' intents, in an attempt to placate traditional Democrats. All while promoting, condoning and even participating in illegal activities including violence, destruction of property, murder and even assassination.

The fact is, many current Republicans were once Democrats as one should never be too old to learn.

P.J. O'Rourke once said "At the core of liberalism is the spoiled child-miserable, as all spoiled children are, unsatisfied, demanding, ill-disciplined, despotic and useless. Liberalism is a philosophy of sniveling brats.

Those who consider themselves traditional Democrats are at a crossroads whether they realize it or not. The choice is yours to either continue on the path of supporting this destructive, progressive anti-American effort or join those who support and defend our liberty loving republic. But remain as you are and you will soon have no voice and cease to exist as a viable political entity.

John R. Young
Hamilton Township

Mother diagnosed with cancer

Eden Kondrat, a devoted wife, and loving mother to her son, Thaddeus, and her newborn daughter, Sinclair, who arrived two months early and has been in the NICU is growing stronger each day.

According to a social media post, what should have been a time of rest and joy quickly turned when Eden was diagnosed with glioblastoma, an aggressive and fast-moving form of brain cancer.

Since her diagnosis, Eden has been balancing new motherhood with surgeries, treatments, and recovery.

A GoFundMe has been started to help the Paw Paw woman to help cover the rising costs of medical care and additional support for her family during this time.

A recent social media post by her family reported Eden began her first round of radiation therapy and chemotherapy. "She was a bit nervous, but it went well and quickly. She also was able to feed Sinclair before her appointments."

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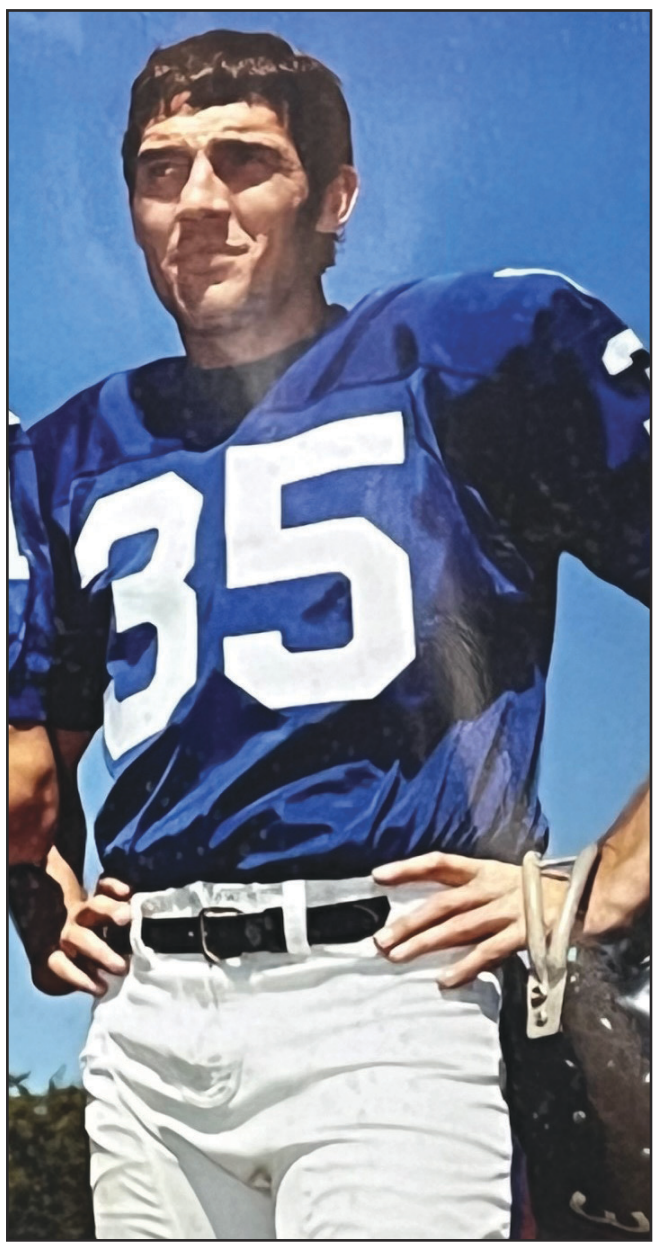
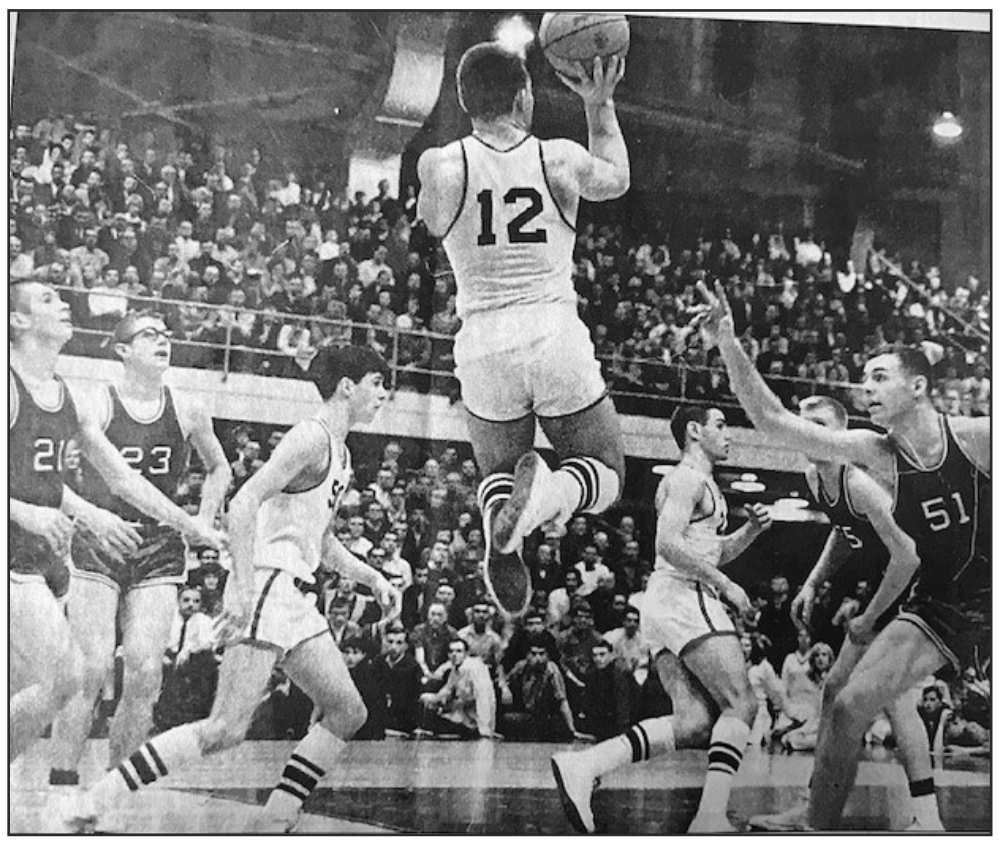
Former star athletes were childhood friends



Pete Gent with Dallas Cowboys



Richie Jordan

By Richard Teremi

Sports fans hear the name Pete Gent of North Dallas Forty, or Richie Jordan of Fennville basketball scoring fame, and they immediately know about their stories. What they will be surprised to discover in this article is that both well-known athletes were friends as children and supported each other's sports careers in the town of Bangor, Michigan.

The idea to bring this story to the public originated with a shared story of actor Nick Nolte and Pete Gent meeting at a restaurant bar in Paw Paw. The details and date are unknown for the meeting. I knew that Nolte played Gent in the movie version of the book, but I wanted to know the whole story.

The topic led to this writer contacting Richie Jordan who revealed an entire body of things most sports fans are unaware of about the two prominent sports stars. They lived in Bangor when both of their careers in sports were developing and were good friends.

Pete Gent, along with his older brother, Charley Jr., and younger brother, Jamie, formed a group of tough competitor sports personalities that deeply impressed young Richie Jordan. They inspired his sports thinking and began a lifelong connection to Bangor and the Gent story.

Jordan as sports people know starred in Fennville leading to the question of how and why he remained close to Bangor growing up. His parents owned stores in Bangor and Fennville and every Sunday they returned to Bangor allowing young Jordan to stay in contact with Pete and his family.

Gent at the same time closely followed the growth and sports accomplishments of his much younger friend even though Jordan had moved to Fennville when he was going on nine years old.

Richie and his father, Tuffy Jordan, watched the Gent teammates compete for the 1960 Class C State Championship. This experience influenced Richie when his sports career took off in his 9th grade year at Fennville High School. Pete and his family came full circle when they ended up following and cheering young Richie Jordan's moment in the spotlight in his new hometown.

Jordan was amazed at the pure jump shot of his friend Pete Gent, and along with his own input developed a sweet one-handed shot that put him in the National High School Sports Hall of Fame long after graduation. When Richie Jordan developed into a star in his own right his friend Pete Gent became his biggest cheerleader.

The 1960 Class C Championship Bangor team includes only one remaining star player I interviewed for this story. His name is Rich Waite, and he played all four sports with Pete Gent, and was good friends with the Gent family.

Gent, who was a three-year scoring leader at Michigan State University, East Lansing, once said he never played with another guard who had the skills of his 1960 Championship team member Rich Waite.

The original Championship season team included Pete Gent, Jamie Gent, Rich Waite, Phil Weiss, Louie Geresy and Bill Mayhak as the key six players. Coach Marland Howard led the 24-1 team in Bangor's memorable 1960 basketball year-to-remember season.

The team's journey to the State Championship was filled with close calls and remarkable comebacks, earning the team nickname "cardiac kids." Gent averaged 25.7 points in the tournament. (A reminder here is that neither Gent nor Richie Jordan's basketball careers had the three-point shot.) The Jordan 44.4-point average in his senior year at Fennville would have had crazy numbers if the three-point shot had existed in 1965. Following high school, Gent became a Michigan State Spartan under Coach Forddy Anderson's leadership. Pete Gent was a highly gifted athlete and scholar. While at MSU, he was awarded a Big Ten athlete scholar award, and he led his MSU Spartans in scoring for three years in a row. (At the time, it had never been done before).

Boston Celtic Star John Havlicek who played against Gent, and represented Ohio State, shared with Richie Jordan that he felt Pete Gent was one of the most difficult players to guard he played against in college. He went on to say that if Gent had decided to accept a pro-basketball offer, he could easily have had a solid career in the NBA.

With the Baltimore Bullets offer behind him in basketball, Gent tried out with the Dallas Cowboys and made the team. The decision was both a blessing and a curse in that pro football allowed him to demonstrate the great hands and talent he had as a receiver but led to multiple knee and back injuries that impacted his playing time and shortened his career.

The period between 1964 and 1968, when Gent was a Cowboy receiver, found him fighting for playing time with several star receivers. If you view old game footage you can see the smooth passing combination of Meredith to Gent that was a joy to observe. He would play in 48 games and had 68 receptions as a Cowboy. Pete played as a wide receiver and tight end for the Cowboys offense.

The Dallas Cowboys won conference titles during the Gent era but were defeated in two significant games, including the 1966 Conference Championship game against the Packers. Gent had his most productive season in 1966, starting 10 games. The Packers, coached by Lombardi, were always a tough opponent for Gent's Cowboys.

The very next year they faced and lost to the same Packers, 21-17, in the sub-zero Ice Bowl of 1967. (The actual temperature in that game was between minus 13 and minus 18 degrees below zero). The Packers would use the win to advance to Super Bowl 1 where they defeated Kansas City, 35-10.

When Pete Gent played his final game with the Cowboys in 1968, he was traded to the New York Giants. When that player deal fell through, Gent returned to Bangor and came home to begin authoring a book that would radically change his life.

The book, North Dallas Forty, was released in 1973 and pulled the curtain back on the professional sport. He would complete the controversial book surprising many that he could author a book with this kind of impact.

The book questioned whether players were pressured to give everything for the team, while management viewed players as simply business. Players would frequently be injured and needed to be healthy enough to practice. If you were unable to practice, you would not play on Sunday when job security was established.

Trainers and players sometimes crossed a line in masking pain and injury to be on the field for practice. Pain injections and various methods to allow a player to perform with injuries had upsides in the short term, but career shortening downsides in the long.

The opinion Pete Gent revealed in his book had the sports world and players talking and being asked in interviews about the darker side of the game revealed in his narrative.

The book sold and was later made into a movie of the same name starring Nick Nolte and Mac Davis. North Dallas Forty and the movie version placed Gent in the fast lane that blew up his social life and for a time left him separated from his son.

When Gent authored his fifth book, The Last Magic Summer, it places the reader inside of the talented athlete's fears, anxiety and attempts to be there for his son, Carter, to warn him about the pitfalls of fame relating to sports.

The Last Magic Summer follows Carter's last year in baseball before college, emphasizing Pete's challenges with aging and his relationship with his son. The book's emotional sharing was deeply moving, and the baseball games against the Derek Jeter led Kalamazoo Maroon Giants is one this writer is certain Carter still fondly remembers.

Doug Palmer (Gent mail carrier) shared that Nick Nolte and Pete went to Decatur Michigan to scout out the possibility of using that diamond for the movie version of the book, Last Magic Summer. The movie option was never exercised or turned into a finished product for reasons unknown.

In looking back at the amazing complex story of Pete Gent, he clearly was a highly intelligent athlete who could do whatever he put his mind to. Playing college basketball, turning down a professional basketball offer, and then heading directly into pro football, (without playing college football), is nothing short of remarkable. Starting a career as a writer with his sports resume is equally amazing.

Richie Jordan still believes that Pete Gent's accomplishments in life exceed his own, and if you have followed or know Jordan's inclusion in the National High School Sports Hall of Fame in 2001, that is a powerful validation of his childhood friend's talent.

The Bangor Museum contains memorabilia and photos of the careers of Gent and Jordan. The two were friends as children, stars in sports as adults, and connected by their hometowns for what they accomplished that residents are still proud of to this day.

Medal of Honor winner, coach, and sports official, Jim McCloughan knew both Pete Gent and Richie Jordan. He commented about both athletes as amazing people and good friends.

This story benefitted hugely from Bob Emmert of the Bangor Museum. His photos and people to contact were invaluable. He additionally offered that Pete Gent was an intellectually opinionated person; but at heart he was a very decent human being. Dick Ely and Doug Palmer, friends of the Gent family story, gave contributing valued memories of Gent's life as well.

Rich Waite is the only remaining member of the 1960 Bangor Class C Championship basketball team. Richie Jordan told this writer that in every sport that Gent and other athletes from Bangor played in high school, Waite played a pivotal role. Pete once told Jordan that Waite could easily have played college basketball at the guard position.

Pete Gent felt Richie Jordan was talented enough to play basketball for any college team in the country. John Mooy (writer, Western Michigan University graduate and Hope College educator) in a YouTube video, 'Jordanville,' recalls feeling like Richie could fly when he watched him play. Jordan had amazing ability to jump, and at 5' 7" could dunk the ball. Gravity be damned.

In 2017, the Basketball Association of Michigan designated Pete Gent a retro Mr. Basketball Award for the 1960 State Championship season at Bangor. (The award did not exist at the time Gent played basketball).

I hope readers who are not familiar with Pete Gent or Richie Jordan will Google their stories. I again recommend the video Jordanville - The story of a big-time small-town legend by John Mooy of South Haven, Michigan. Video footage of Pete Gent is also available online.

Jamie Gent, brother of Pete, graduated from Central Michigan University in 1967 following an excellent college sports career for the Chippewas. He would go on to be an amazing coach, teacher, and administrator at Haslett (Lake Lansing) School District, where he retired with community honors.

Fans of Richie Jordan know that this article could have featured a ton of his accomplished statistics in high school sports while he played at Fennville. Jordan instead insisted (as mentioned above) that his good friend, Pete Gent, will be recognized for the amazing and varied sports victories he had in his own career. I would argue that this is how friends support friends.

I conclude with Gent's North Dallas Forty remark: "Writing is almost as terrifying as playing football." Without the support of Bob Emmert, John Mooy, and Richie Jordan, this project and labor of love would never have been possible. This writer will never forget these two athletes and their common small town shared friendship, and amazing sports careers.

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SPORTS

Pole vaulter leads Bloomingdale boys

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINGDALE — Bloomingdales' boys track team during the 2025 season was led by senior pole vaulter Isaac Goudswaard.

He was second at regionals at 13 feet for a personal record. He was 28th at the state meet.

At regionals Connor Huff was 10th in the 1,600 meters.

Huff had a personal record of 5:21.14 in the 1,600-meter run. He placed fifth at a SW10 meet. He was on an 4x800 relay team which took first at a WS10 meet in Comstock and was second in a home meet with a time of 9:39.38.

Reed Remington, Josh Odell and Adrian Pope was also on that relay team.

Senior Kelsey Simms had an excellent season in the 300-meter hurdles and was fifth in the regional meet in 42.90 seconds for a personal record. He won four races during the season including two SW 10 meets. He was also on the 4x200, 4x800 and 4x400 relay teams.

Thrower leads Bloomingdale girls

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINDALE — Rowan Hegelmann had a strong throwing season for Bloomingdale's girls track and field team.

Hegelmann threw the shot put 33-01.00 in the regionals for third place and narrowly missed qualifying for the state meet.

Hegelmann was a senior and won all of her meets prior to the regionals. She was 35-8 at the SW10 meet in Comstock, and 36-7 in the Comstock Invitational. She had her personal record of 37-5.75 in the WP League jamboree.

Hegelmann threw the shot 35-2 at a SW 10 meet at Centreville and 34-4 at Bangor in a multi-team meet at Bangor.

Bloomingdale hosted a meet on May 6 and Hegelmann threw the shot 35-3.5. At the Gobles Invitational, Hegelmann won with a throw of 35-4.

She also threw the discus and had a PR of 101-5 at a WP jamboree. She won a SW10 meet at Comstock with a throw of 87-3.

In a home meet at Bloomingdale, Hegelmann took first with a throw of 95-2.

Mattawan baseball standout heads for collegiate ranks

Troy Scarff was the starting shortstop, batted third in the lineup for most of the year, and served as a team captain for Mattawan baseball.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — Troy Scarff was an excellent baseball player for Mattawan who has graduated and is now looking forward to the collegiate ranks.

Scarff said he will be playing baseball for Kalamazoo Community College.

"Our team had a very successful year winning another district championship and finishing with a strong record overall of 26-9-4," Scarff said. "I feel as is if I performed very well and ultimately had a successful year both offensively at the plate and defensively in the field.

"I feel as if I made many physical improvements as I was pushed physically everyday by my coaches and teammates, but perhaps where I saw the most improvements was in the mental aspect of the game. Last year I had a disappointing year largely due to doubting my abilities and not being able to deal with failure well. This year I was able to make that jump where I not only was able to overcome failure, but I used it as motivation to further excel."

Scarff was the starting shortstop, batted third in the lineup for most of the year, and served as a team captain.

"Last year I had a much different role as there were many very talented seniors ahead of me," he recalled. "I still started in the field at either third or second base, but there was less expected of me in terms of hitting. Going into this season I had large shoes to fill and much bigger expectations.

"I feel as if one of my key strengths was my overall athleticism, which came from playing a variety of sports growing up and being pushed to compete at a higher level than my older siblings. That foundation helped me adapt to playing above my level of competition and stay competitive on the field. I also focused a lot on being consistent in my work and coachable as there is still many things that I do not know despite playing the game for many years."

Scarff added:

"Apart from the hours spent physically sharpening my skills, I took a bigger focus on improving my mental fortitude as previously talked about. I put effort into building a routine that would instill confidence in me as well as better understanding that failure is inevitable and how I deal with the failure will determine my success.

"My most memorable moment as a performer would have to be our double header against Loy Norrix where I hit two home runs.

There were many memorable moments as a team however, such as our district play-in game where we beat our rival, Portage Central, 16-1 as well as our district championship game where we won 5-0 over Loy Norrix. These are the most memorable in my mind."

As for expectations, "I am someone who often sets extremely high expectations for myself and I fully believe that I can achieve these expectations, so even though my season may be viewed as very successful I feel as if I have only met my expectations," he said.

"Going into the season I feel as if many people doubted us due to losing a strong senior class, but I still had very high expectations and hopes for our team and knew what we were capable of. So in the minds of many we exceeded expectations, but in my mind we met my expectations and I believe we could've made an even further run in the playoffs if things fell our way."

Scarff also played football.

Paw Paw pitcher had memorable year

Lauren Mackellar returns as Paw Paw's pitcher again next season.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Lauren Mackellar will fondly remember her pitching season as a sophomore for Paw Paw when she helped the team be state runners-up in Division 3.

Mackellar had a strong effort in the 3-0 loss to Richmond in the state finals. She went six innings, allowing three runs on eight hits, striking out six and walking two.

"I felt it was good," she said of her pitching effort after the game. I don't know if it was my best. I tried my hardest to leave it on the field."

Richmond "is a good small ball team," Mackellar said. "They definitely bunt a lot."

Paw Paw finished the season at 37-4.

"This is definitely not where we thought we would wind up," Mackellar said. "This is a lot better than we thought would happen. We're proud of it. We're sad for the season to be over. I did not think we would make it this far.

"I think we came together and played hard and gave it our all every game."

Mackellar has been a pitcher for about eight years. It was her first year as varsity. "I think I did better than I thought I would," she said, adding the rise ball was probably her top weapon. But she wants to work on her curveball and changeup next year.

Softball is her only sport and she's looking forward to next season when the entire team returns.

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SPORTS

South Haven freshman athlete has terrific season

Kaitlynn Buero had a strong freshman season for South Haven.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

Kaitlynn Buero was an exceptional freshman athlete for South Haven this past season with track and field and swimming and diving.

"Last season, I kept getting new personal records in my races throughout the season," she said. "I got more stamina and learned more about the mechanics of running. I was a freshman running sprints. My role will be the same as a sophomore.

"I am committed to the team, am a hard worker, and bring positivity to the team. I worked on fundamentals and I worked on endurance. Some of my most memorable moments were just hanging out with the team.

"I am still working on meeting my high expectations for myself."

Buero is also on the swimming team and is looking forward to three more seasons in that sport. She's an extremely talented athlete.

"Track is my favorite sport because I like the thrill of sprinting," Buero said.

She also does ballet. It's likely to be a very busy offseason for Buero.

Paw Paw second baseman eyes next season

Rachel Zache was the starting second baseman for Paw Paw.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — Raegan Zache is looking forward to two more seasons in Paw Paw's softball program.

But it may not be easy for Zache and her Red Wolves teammate to accomplish what they did in 2025.

Zache was the sophomore second baseman for the Paw Paw softball squad which finished the season at 37-4 and was Division 2 state runners-up.

She was at second base all season. "I think people can rely on me and I can rely on them to cover for me," Zache said.

It was her first year on varsity but Zache says she wasn't overly nervous over the prospects of playing varsity softball.

"I'd say I was pretty confident," she said. "I know what I can do. I know my strengths and I know why weaknesses. My team will pick me up."

At the plate, "I think I hit the ball pretty good," Zache said. "Obviously there were some times where I was in a little bit of a slump but my teammates picked me up really well."

She recalls her most memorable hit.

"I hit a home run against Gull Lake and it was really special," she said. "It was the Strike Out cancer game and was really special."

Softball is her only sport.

"This team has really come together," Zache said.

Area Church Services

PAW PAW

ALMENA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
27503 CR 375
Pastor Len Schoenherr
668-2811 • www.almenaumc.com
SUNDAY
Worship - 11 a.m.
(Childcare Provided)
FRIDAY: AA- 8 p.m.

••••

COVEY HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
33566 28th Avenue
(corner of 28th & M-40)
269-628-2139 • www.coveyhill.org
Pastor Daniel Wilson
SUNDAY
Worship @10:45am
Nursery & Children's Church provided
Messages available on YouTube

••••

FAITH OF THE APOSTLES CURCH
34580 M-40 Highway
Elder David Harn
1 (269) 512-4586
SUNDAY
Christian Education - 10 a.m.
Wroship Service - 11:30 a.m.
WEDNESDAY • Bible Study - 7 p.m.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
32464 Red Arrow
Pastor Horace M. "Buddy" Turner... 657-2090
SUNDAY
Worship - 11 a.m.
on Facebook:
www.Facebook.com/buddyturner2 or search:
"Buddy Turner"

••••

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
120 Pine St, Paw Paw
Worship: 11am Sundays
in person or online at -
www.pawpawpres.com or
www.youtube.com/@1stprespawpaw

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NEW HOPE FAMILY
201 W. Michigan Avenue
Pastor Mark Roberts
www.newhopefellowship.org
SUNDAY
Morning Worship - 10 a.m.

••••

PAW PAW SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CURCH
60409 South M-40
Pastor Sean Reed
Lawn Services - 10 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.pawpaw.church
Oline worship services on Facebook &
YourTube

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PAW PAW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
420 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-7727
Pastor Dan Phillips
Sunday Service at 9:30 am

••••

RED ARROW MINISTRIES
31133 Red Arrow Highway
Rev. G. Ben Bowater, IV Founding Pastor
SUNDAY Worship - 9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.redarrowministries.org for live stream
worship

••••

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
412 Cedar Street
Handicap Accessible
657-3762 • www.stmarkpawpaw.com
e-mail: stmarkspawpaw@gmail.com
Mailing Address:
P.O.Box 307, Paw Paw, MI 49079
SUNDAY Worship 9:30 a.m.

••••

ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
500 Paw Paw Street
Rev. Fr. Alan P. Jorgensen
657-4459
SATURDAY Vigil - 4:00 p.m.
SUNDAY MASSES - 9AM & 11AM
Holy days & Daily Masses
Consult Bulletin

••••

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
721 Pine Street
Pastor Phillip Phifer
Church: 657-4840
School: 657-5921
Sunday Services 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

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TRUTH CHURCH
32560 56th Ave. • 657-5042
www.truthchurchpawpaw.com
Pastor Steven Green
SUNDAY
School - 10 a.m.
Evening Service - 6 p.m.
THURSDAY Bible Study - 7 p.m.

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IGLESIA DEL ESPÍRITU SANTO/ CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
30037 E Red Arrow Hwy., Bilingual
Pastors Maggie and Jay Salas
Domingo/Sunday:
Adoración | Worship- 10 a.m.
Jueves/Thursday: Oracion/ Estudió Bíblico |
Prayer/Bible Study- 7 p.m.
(269) 377-6514/ (269) 993-6727

LAWTON

DAILY HARVEST MINISTRIES
117 S.Franklin Street
Pastor Jack Shanley
SUNDAY Worship - 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Bible Study - 6 p.m.

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IGLESIA PENTECOSTES
Eel Movimiento misionero Mundial, Inc.
Bilingual
117 S. Franklin Street
Pastors Arturo & Lourdez Hernandez
(616) 656-0137
SERVICES
Domingo - 9:30 a.m.
Martes y Jueves - 7:30 p.m.
Local: (269) 655-8071

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LAWTON EVANGELICAL CHURCH
425 S. Nursery Street, Lawton • 624-1524
Call if you need help in some way
www.lawtonevan.com
SUNDAY Worship Services - 10 a.m.
We offer Nursery and Children's Church

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NEW COMMUNITY CHURCH
502 N. Main Street, Lawton, MI 49065
Pastor Adam Potgiesser
Sunday Worship 10am
www.nc2online.com • facebook.com/nc2online
(269) 299-2003

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ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
624-1050
Pastor Ashlei Horn
SUNDAY Worship - 10:00 a.m.
www.stpoulsumclawton.com or on Facebook
www.Facebook.com/Lawton-St-Pauls-UMC

MARCELLUS

ST. MARGARET MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
296 E. Dibble St.
Rev. John Tran.
668-3312
SUNDAY - 9:45AM

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HARMONY CHAPEL
88067 C.R. 652 (In the SW corner of Porter Twp.)
Rev. Ron Packer
269-548-7348
Please join us as we continue to Worship in the
Country Since 1894
SUNDAY Service - 12:30 p.m.
For mor information or directions call:
Neal Ferguson: 269-624-6837 or
Ann Nesbitt: 269-624-6781

DECATUR

DECATUR BIBLE CHURCH
80797 M-51, Decatur • (269) 423-5111
Pastor Steven Pace
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study &
Prayer 5:00 p.m.
facebook.com/DecaturBibleChurch • http://
www.decaturbible.org

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Decatur New Hope Community Church
319 ½ West Delaware Street
Pastor Ross Tarantino
SUNDAY • Worship Service-10:00 a.m.
TUESDAY • Bible Study-1:00 p.m.
269-423-8136
info@decaturnewhopecommunity.net

LAWRENCE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Corner of Exchange & James Street • 674-8381
Pastor Doug Tipken
SUNDAY Worship - 11 a.m.
lawrencemethodist-church.org
for information of online videos

GOBLES

NORTHPOINT MINISTRIES OF GOBLES
04077 M40 • 269-628-9199
northpointgobles@gmail.com
Pastors: Gary Lounsberry & John Losen Jr.
Sunday: 11am - Morning Worship
Monday: 7 pm - REFRESH Bible Study
Wednesday: 7pm - Prayer Meeting

MATTAWAN

Calvary Community Church
7829 S. 5th St
Pastor Gregory VanHeukelom
375-6240 • www.calvaryreformed.org
Website: https://www.calvary-community.
church/
Worship still 10 am Sunday with live Facebook
Jody's Closet, a free clothing ministry is open
Mon/Tue 10am-12 and Thur 6-7:30pm
And the 1st Saturday of the month 8:30-10am.•

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FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH
56070 Murray Street
Pastor Chuck Rawsthorne
SUNDAY
School - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Service - 10:30 a.m.
(In person and on Facebook)

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MATTAWAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
23680 Front Ave.
668-3263 • www.mattawancc.com
mattawancommunitychurch@gmail.com
Pastor Eric Baird
SUNDAYS AT 10:25 A.M

••••

ST. JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC CHURCH
23830 Front Ave.
Rev. John Tran
668-3312 • www.stjohnbosco.com
Sunday Mass times to 8:00 AM & 11:30 AM
(Saturday Mass time remains at 4:00 PM)

DIRECTORY OF CHURCH SERVICES IS PROVIDED BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS

THE CLOTHES BASKET
314 Paw Paw Street
Paw Paw • 657-6441

DE SMIA
Insurance Agency, INC.
130 N. Main Street
Lawton • 624-4411

CAMPBELL MURCH
CEMETERY
MEMORIALS, INC.
56556 Main Street
Mattawan • 668-3350

Adams FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATION SERVICES
ADAMS FUNERAL HOME
Serving the Community Since 1948
504 W. Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw • 657-6347

ho
HIEMSTRA OPTICAL CO.
Michael Houser & staff
133 E. Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw • 657-4511

St JULIAN
winery • distillery
Michigan's Oldest & Largest Winery
716 S. Kalamazoo Street
Paw Paw • 657-5568

BRONSON
LakeView Hospital
408 Hazen Street
Paw Paw • 657-3141

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$20.00 email Subscription.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PAW TOWNSHIP
SYNOPSIS OF MEETING
JULY 14, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Called to Order by Supervisor Palenick 6:00 P.M.
Board Members Present: Thomas Palenick, James DeGroff, Dennis Reynolds, Rebecca Payne, Lisa Zinkil
Absent: None
Guest Present: Hope Vasquez, Dave Sons, Don Welch, Frank Walters, Sly and Lisa Sylvester, Ben Brousseau, Toni and Dave Pool, Frank Stout, Angie Honda, David Smith

- Approved June 3rd and 9th, 2025, meeting minutes.
- Approved the Bid from Vogt's Snow Removal for the resealing of the Township parking lot.
- Approved the use of ½ the parking lot for Saturday of the Grape Festival.
- Approved Siegfried Crandall PC for the annual audit not to exceed $13,300.
- Approved Resolution 250714-1 Ackley Lake SAD
- Approved Resolution 250714-2 Maple Lake SAD
- Approved the request to renew Lake Cora's SAD
- Approved Ordinance 291 NCC District Amendment
- Approved Ordinance 292 Solar Amendment

Meeting Adjourned 7:33 P.M.
Rebecca F. Payne, Clerk

State of Michigan
Probate Court • Van Buren County
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
DECEDENT'S ESTATE
Case NO. 2024-1074-DE
Estate of Leah Beth Froelich
Date of Birth June 14,1950

TO ALL CREDITORS: * *
NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The decedent, **Leah Beth Froelich , died February 5, 2024 .**
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to **Michelle Meyer ,** personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after the date of publication of this notice.

April 19, 2024

Attorney
Cordell R. Jones (P15567)
120 West Main, P.O. Box 187
Marcellus, MI 49067
269/646-5511
Personal representative
Michelle Meyer
7607 West V Avenue
Schoolcraft, MI 49087
269/217-5125

DECEDENT'S TRUST ESTATE
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Trust Estate of **Douglas John Latchaw,** Date of birth: March 29, 1945
Name of Trust: trust dated: **Douglas and Kathryn Latchaw Trust dated August 26, 2005, as amended on May 1, 2010, February 23, 2018, and February 11, 2020.**
NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
Decedent, **Douglas John Latchaw,** who lived at **45354 CR 390, Bloomingdale, Michigan 49026 died on February 28, 2025.**
There is no personal representative of Decedent's estate to whom a Letter of Authority has been issued. Creditors of Decedent are notified that all claims against the Decedent's trust estate will be forever barred unless presented to trustee, Tonya Finch, c/o Laaksonen Law Offices PC at 226-2 E. Michigan Ave. Paw Paw, MI 49079 within four (4) months after the date of publication of this notice.
Tonya Finch
8511 66th Street
Kenosha, WI 53142

Albert W. Laaksonen, II (P43920)
Laaksonen Law Offices, P.C.
226½ East Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-655-1035

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: JESSE STONE; ATTY: TEAM H; 1ST PUB: 7/3/2025; ATTY FILE #: 524395F01; INSURER: FNMA
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 31, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Jesse Stone and Stephanie N. Stone FKA Stephanie Fabian, husband and wife
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC
Date of Mortgage: November 18, 2020
Date of Mortgage Recording: June 14, 2021
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $153,034.08
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Pine Grove, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: That part of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4 of Section 6, Town 1 South, Range 13 West, described as: Beginning at the Southeast corner of said North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4 of said section; thence North 00 degrees 40 minutes 39 seconds West, on the East section line, 592.93 feet; thence South 89 degrees 34 minutes 34 seconds
West, parallel with and 66 feet South of the North line of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4, 220.45 feet; thence South 00 degrees 40 minutes 39 seconds East, parallel with the East section line, 592.81 feet to the South line of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4; thence North 89 degrees 36 minutes 22 seconds East, on same, 220.45 feet to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 01464 M 40, Gobles, MI 49055-9075
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: July 3, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145, Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1565480

(07-03)(07-24)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: JAMIE HANNAR; ATTY: ORLANS; 1ST PUB: 7/24/2025; ATTY FILE #: 25-009166; INSURER: FNMA

ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on AUGUST 21, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Jamie Hannar, an unmarried woman, to Fifth Third Mortgage - MI, LLC, Mortgagee, dated June 26, 2008 and recorded June 30, 2008 in Liber 1504, Page 243 and Loan Modification Agreement recorded on July 11, 2011, in Liber 1553, Page 184, Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Fifth Third Bank N.A. as successor by merger to Fifth Third Mortgage Company, by assignment.
There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Twenty-One Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-Five and 9/100 Dollars ($121,965.09).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on AUGUST 21, 2025.
Said premises are located in the Township of Porter, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as:
Beginning at a point 20 feet South of the Northeast corner of the Southwest quarter of the Northeast quarter of Section 15, Town 4 North, Range 13 West; thence West 10 rods; thence South 20 rods; thence East 10 rods; thence North 20 rods to beginning.
81202 County Road 652, Lawton, Michigan 49065
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: July 24, 2025
File No. 25-009166
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(07-24)(08-14)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: WILLIAM ENGEL; ATTY: TEAM X; 1ST PUB: 7/24/2025; ATTY FILE #: 040244F08; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT

Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on August 21, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): William Engel, a single man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): U.S. Bank Trust Company, National Association, as Indenture Trustee, successor in interest to U.S. Bank National Association, as Indenture Trustee for SASCO Mortgage Loan Trust 2004-GEL3
Date of Mortgage: April 23, 2004
Date of Mortgage Recording: April 30, 2004
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $88,190.20
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Antwerp, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: The Easterly 550 feet of the following: that part of the Northwest quarter of Section 18, Town 3 South, Range 13 West described as: Commencing at the Northeast corner of Section 18, Town 3 South, Range 13 West, thence South 00 degree 13 minutes 51 seconds West, 202.09 feet along the East line of the Northeast quarter of said Section 18 to the center line of Highway I-94; thence South 60 degrees 28 minutes 4 seconds West, 3688.30 feet; thence South 172.15 to the Southerly right of way line of I-94 and the place of beginning of this description thence continuing South in the center of a road described in Liber 148 of Deeds on Page 134 to a point which is East of a point on the West Section line of said Section 18 which point is 40.35 chains (2663.10 feet) North to the Southwest corner of Section 18; thence West to the Southerly right of way line of said I-94; thence Northeasterly along said Southerly right of way to Place of Beginning.
Common street address (if any): 59443 S Lagrave St, Paw Paw, MI 49079-9272
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: July 24, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1567326

(07-24)(08-14)

PAW PAW TOWNSHIP
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

NOTICE OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENT PUBLIC HEARING
LAKE CORA AQUATIC PLANT CONTROL SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF PAW PAW TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Paw Paw Township Board, as authorized by PA 188 of 1954, as amended, proposes to undertake an aquatic plant control project (with associated activities) on Lake Cora in Paw Paw Township, as more particularly described below and to create a special assessment district for the recovery of the costs thereof by special assessment against the properties benefited. The Special Assessment District shall be known as the LAKE CORA AQUATIC PLANT CONTROL SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT NO. 2022-1.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the land and premises in the special assessment district within which the foregoing improvements are proposed to be made and within which the costs thereof are to be specially assessed are more particularly described as parcels abutting Lake Cora or having frontage on Lake Cora, including the following parcel numbers:

80-14-017-047-10	80-14-740-012-00	80-14-110-023-00	80-14-110-001-50	80-14-018-066-21	80-14-740-026-00	80-14-440-028-01	80-14-110-014-01
80-14-019-023-03	80-14-018-015-00	80-14-740-016-01	80-14-110-030-00	80-14-110-004-50	80-14-018-066-29	80-14-740-030-00	80-14-740-002-00
80-14-110-018-00	80-14-019-028-00	80-14-018-024-00	80-14-740-021-00	80-14-440-007-00	80-14-110-008-00	80-14-018-066-60	80-14-740-037-00
80-14-740-008-00	80-14-110-020-00	80-14-019-032-00	80-14-018-032-50	80-14-740-024-10	80-14-440-014-00	80-14-110-011-50	80-14-018-070-00
80-14-018-010-00	80-14-740-013-00	80-14-110-027-00	80-14-110-002-01	80-14-018-066-25	80-14-740-027-00	80-14-740-001-00	80-14-110-015-00
80-14-019-025-05	80-14-018-015-30	80-14-740-018-01	80-14-440-001-01	80-14-110-005-00	80-14-018-066-30	80-14-740-032-00	80-14-740-005-00
80-14-110-018-50	80-14-019-029-00	80-14-018-029-00	80-14-740-022-00	80-14-440-009-00	80-14-110-009-00	80-14-018-067-10	80-14-740-038-00
80-14-740-010-00	80-14-110-020-50	80-14-019-033-00	80-14-018-063-02	80-14-740-024-30	80-14-440-015-00	80-14-110-012-00	80-14-018-072-00
80-14-018-013-01	80-14-740-014-00	80-14-110-028-00	80-14-110-003-00	80-14-018-066-27	80-14-740-028-00	80-14-740-001-10	80-14-110-016-00
80-14-019-026-00	80-14-018-015-40	80-14-740-019-00	80-14-440-004-00	80-14-110-006-00	80-14-018-066-40	80-14-740-033-00	80-14-740-003-00
80-14-110-019-00	80-14-019-030-00	80-14-018-031-00	80-14-740-023-00	80-14-440-012-00	80-14-110-010-00	80-14-018-068-00	80-14-019-020-00
80-14-740-011-60	80-14-110-022-00	80-14-110-001-25	80-14-018-066-18	80-14-740-025-00	80-14-440-018-00	80-14-110-013-00	80-14-110-017-00
80-14-018-014-00	80-14-740-014-10	80-14-110-029-00	80-14-110-004-00	80-14-018-066-28	80-14-740-029-00	80-14-740-001-50	80-14-740-007-00
80-14-019-027-00	80-14-018-019-00	80-14-740-020-00	80-14-440-005-00	80-14-110-007-00	80-14-018-066-50	80-14-740-035-00	
80-14-110-019-50	80-14-019-031-00	80-14-018-032-40	80-14-740-024-01	80-14-440-013-00	80-14-110-011-00	80-14-018-069-00	

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Township Board has received plans showing the proposed aquatic plant control project, associated activities, any proposed improvements and locations thereof, together with an estimate of the cost of the project in the amount of $60,000 (including administrative costs), and has placed the same on file with the Township clerk; has passed a resolution tentatively declaring its intention to make the improvement and to create the special assessment district; and has tentatively found the petitions for the improvement in compliance with the statutory requirements. The plans, cost estimates and special assessment district may be examined at the Clerk's office from the date of this Notice to the date of the public hearing and may further be examined at such public hearing.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that a public hearing on the plans, district, cost estimates and the carryover of any surplus funds from any expiring special assessment district will be held at the **Paw Paw Township Hall at 114 N. Gremps, Paw Paw, Michigan** commencing at **6:00 p.m. on August 11, 2025**. At the hearing, the Board will consider any written objections and comments to any of the foregoing matters which are filed with the clerk at or before the hearing and any objections or comments raised at the hearing. If written objections are filed with the township board at or before the hearing, signed by the record owners of land constituting more than 20% of the area within the proposed special assessment district, then the township board may not proceed unless petitions in support of the project, signed by record owners of more than 50% of the area to be made into a special assessment district, are filed with the township. Following the hearing, the township board may revise, correct, amend or change the plans, cost estimates or special assessment district.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that appearance and protest at the public hearing is required in order to appeal to the State Tax Tribunal within 30 days after the special assessment roll is confirmed. An owner or party in interest, or his or her agent, may appear in person at the hearing to protest the special assessment, or shall be permitted to file at or before the hearing his or her appearance or protest by letter and his or her personal appearance shall not be required. All interested persons are invited to be present in person or by representative and to submit comments concerning the establishment of the special assessment district, the plans, cost estimates or the carryover of surplus funds from any expiring special assessment district.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that if the township board determines to proceed with the special assessments, the board will cause a special assessment roll to be prepared and another hearing will be held, after notice to record owners of property proposed to be specially assessed, to hear public comments concerning the proposed special assessments.

Paw Paw Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed material being considered at the hearing, to individuals with disabilities at the hearing upon seven (7) days' notice to the Township Clerk. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Township Clerk.

Rebecca Payne
Paw Paw Township Clerk
114 N. Gremps Street
Paw Paw, MI 49079
(269) 657-4340

County completes successful live test of public alert system

PAW PAW - Van Buren County Sheriff Dan Abbott and Undersheriff Casey Davis, along with the Van Buren County Office of Domestic Preparedness/Emergency Management, announced the successful completion of Wednesday, July 16, scheduled live test of the Public Alerting System.

"As part of our commitment to public safety, this test at 10:50 a.m., - advertised in advance - was conducted through TV and radio broadcasts, as well as mobile phone emergency alerts, to help ensure that the Emergency Alert System (EAS) functions as expected during a real emergency," said Sheriff Abbott.

He added, "We thank all community members for your attention during this brief test. These scheduled drills help us prepare for potential events such as: severe weather, hazardous material incidents, natural disasters, and any widespread public safety emergency," said Sheriff Abbott.

Michigan Maritime Museum hosts Sweetwater Film Showcase

By James Windell

The first ever film festival sponsored by the Michigan Maritime Museum will take place on Thursday, July 24 and Friday, July 25, 2025.

Called the Sweetwater Film Showcase, the two-day event is part of the Museum's Whispers Across the Water series and features compelling short and feature-length documentaries that dive deep into the human stories woven into the region's maritime history.

"We're very excited about this," says Ashley Deming, the Museum's Director of Education & Programs. "It is the very first film showcase we have ever done. We have held screenings before of documentary films, but this will be our first time showing multiple documentaries over a two-day period."

Among the 10 films in the festival will be the multi award-winning documentary "The Fish Thief: A Great Lakes Mystery" narrated by Academy Award winning actor J.K. Simmons. This riveting true story is a documentary from Skyhound Media and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission that tells the story of an environmental crisis that nearly destroyed one of the world's most treasured fisheries. It unravels a hidden catastrophe that impacted industries, communities, and livelihoods on both sides of the U.S.- Canada border as it recounts how the Great Lakes were devastated by the sea lamprey, a parasitic invader that decimated the lake trout population.

"There are different films on many different topics," Deming says. "The film 'Ripples: Casting for Change,' for instance, is from students from Harbor Springs where they are doing a little pushback against male-dominated recreational activities."

On Thursday, July 24, the festival's first day, there will be seven films. In addition to "Ripples: Casting for Change," featuring six elementary school girls in the middle of Lake Michigan testing their fly-fishing skills, there will be a showing of "Boblo Boats: A Detroit Ferry Tale" and "Lake Leelanau, Spirit of the Lake." The latter documentary focuses on insightful interviews with expert historians who trace Lake Leelanau's story from its formation by ancient glaciers to its significance for the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians and early settlers.

The Friday, July 25 schedule includes "The Fish Thief" as well as two other longer films: "Nme the Tribal Way," which examines the lake sturgeon's life cycle from hatching eggs to spawning adults, and "The Negotiator: Billy Caldwell," a documentary that explores the life of the Métis leader who navigated shifting alliances and treaties in early Chicago, striving to protect Native land and people during turbulent times.

"There will be panel discussions with the filmmaker's representatives that will follow each showing," adds Deming. "This is all included in the price of admission and once you've purchased a ticket for the day, you can leave the museum and return."

The Sweetwater Film Showcase is sponsored by the Horton Family in honor of Gary Horton. Festival times run from 10:30 am until 3:30 pm on both July 24 and July 25 at Michigan Maritime Museum, 260 Dyckman Ave., South Haven. Tickets are $20 per day or $15 per day for Museum members including access to all film screenings for the day, panel discussions, and Museum admission. Popcorn and non-alcoholic drinks are available for purchase at the event. Seating is limited and advance registration is encouraged.

For film schedules and other information or to reserve tickets, visit www.MichiganMaritimeMuseum.org/sweetwater-film-showcase

Public hearing for Palisades restart scheduled

FEMA, state and local officials will conduct a public briefing August 5, 2025, for residents to learn about emergency public health and safety plans and preparations for the restart of the Holtec Palisades, LLC nuclear power plant.

Officials from the Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division and county emergency management offices in the vicinity of the plant will provide an overview of preparedness plans and how they would function in the event of an emergency. FEMA officials will outline the review and approval process of those plans and provide a brief overview of the July 29 preparedness exercise. The exercise—part of FEMA's Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program—assesses the ability of the state of Michigan, Van Buren County, Allegan County and Berrien County to respond to an emergency at the Holtec Palisades nuclear power plant.

Details for the public briefing are as follows:

WHAT: Public Briefing on Emergency Plans and Preparations for the Holtec Palisades Nuclear

Power Plant Restart

WHEN:Tuesday, August 5, 2025, from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

WHERE:Van Buren Intermediate School District Conference Center, 490 S. Paw Paw St., Lawrence, MI 49064

Residents will also have the opportunity to suggest improvements or changes to the emergency plans briefed during the meeting. Those who cannot attend the briefing in person may submit comments no later than August 8, 2025, by emailing FEMA-PublicComment-Palisades@fema.dhs.gov.

1913 Mystery of Dr. Six to be explained at Lawrence Twp. Hall

LAWRENCE - Members of the Van Buren County Historical Society will explain the Dr. Six family deaths of early 1913 at the Lawrence Township Hall, 411 N. Paw Paw St., Lawrence, on Aug. 3, at 2 p.m.

On Feb. 6, 1913, in Lawrence, Mrs. Bernice Six and her 10-year-old daughter, Dorothy, died after a house fire. Five weeks later, husband, Dr. Arthur Six, died in private, by suicide. Later, at the coroner's inquest, Dr. Six was charged with the murders of Bernice and Dorothy by poison and legal proceedings continued for months.

In the midst of all this, Dr. Six' secret lover, a local schoolteacher, quietly left Michigan.

And that's only the beginning. In 1913, people were divided over who or what caused the three deaths of the Dr. Six family.

Historical Society member Geoff Abrams said, "I think we're going to be presenting more information in one place about these deaths than has ever been done before. We're going to present the story in such a way that people can come to their own conclusions."

NOTICE
CITY OF GOBLES

Notice of a vacancy on the Gobles City Commission.

Letters from Qualified Electors wishing to be considered to complete the term through 11/27 will be accepted through Wednesday, August 14, 2025at Gobles City Hall, 105 E. Main St., P.O.Box 38, Gobles, MI 49055

Please call Gobles City Hall at 269-628-2246 for questions or more information.

VILLAGE OF MATTAWAN
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Village of Mattawan Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing to consider a Variance Request received from **Edward Kucinich and Florence Kucinich** for property located at **23968 E. McGillen Avenue, Mattawan property ID # 80-46-700-057-20** requesting a variance from the Village of Mattawan Zoning Ordinance Article 10 Section 10.30 (M) Automotive Fueling Stations including those combined with convenience stores.

1169-B17 12-3-13 594-548 986-257+258 *** BEG SW COR; TH N00D32'22"E 311.69 FT; S87D54'13"E 330.37 FT; S00D32'22"W 311.24 FT; N87D58'58"W 330.36 FT TO POB. *** SPLIT ON 11/14/2024 FROM 80-46-700-057-01; FOR 2025

The variance, if granted, would allow for a building size larger than one-thousand (1000) square feet.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Public Hearing on said request will be held on **August 11, 2025, before the Zoning Board of Appeals at 7:00 p.m.** in the Village meeting room at which time all interested persons will be given an opportunity to be heard.

The meeting will be held in the Village Office meeting room at the address below. Please send all written comments to:

Village of Mattawan
24221 Front Avenue
Mattawan, MI 49071
(269) 668-2128 • offices@mattawanmi.com
Jolie Storm-Artis, Village Clerk

NOTICE OF PAW PAW TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

The Paw Paw Township Board of Trustees approved the following amendments to the Paw Paw Township Zoning Ordinance:

1. Amendment of Section 42-5.08 C to allow "contractor's services" as a special land use in the Neighborhood Convenience Commercial District.
2. Amendment of Section 2.02 related to solar energy definitions, amendment to strike Section 8.26, and an amendment of Section 8.27 Solar Energy to revise the requirements for solar energy systems.

Copies of related materials and the full Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map are available for review at the Paw Paw Township Hall during regular business hours (114 N. Gremps St., Paw Paw, MI, 49079). Relevant information is available by request- call 269-657-4340 or email clerk@pawpawtownship.org.

Planning Commission Public Hearing (solar): April 15, 2025

Planning Commission Public Hearing (contractor's services): May 20, 2025

Township Board Adoption: July 14, 2025

Publication Date: July 24, 2025

Effective Date: July 31, 2025

ANTWERP TOWNSHIP
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Ackley Lake Eradication Special Assessment District

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Township Board held a public hearing on July 8, 2025 where the Board heard comments and objections to the creation of Eradication of special assessment district and the proposed cost estimate for eradication of invasive species. The Board intends to consider a resolution approving the validity of the petitions, creating the special assessment district and approving the cost estimate at its regular Board meeting on August 12,2025.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the Township Board will also hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, August 12,2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the Township Hall, 24821 Front Avenue Mattawan, MI 49071,** to review and hear any objections regarding the special assessment roll which spreads the 2025 cost and expenses on all lots and parcels located within the 13 lot owners along Ackley Lake residing in Antwerp Township, pursuant to Act 188 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1954, as amended. The special assessments on the roll are to be billed with the December 2025 winter tax bill.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the amount proposed to be assessed to each of the 13 lot owners within the Antwerp Township along Ackley Lake Eradication of invasive species will be **$196.86** for 2025 winter tax bill.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the proposed special assessment roll may be inspected at the office of the Township Clerk, 24821 Front Avenue Mattawan, MI 49071, within the Township on regular business days of such office and may also be inspected at the public hearing.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that at the public hearing, the Township Board will review said proposed special assessment roll and any comments or objections thereto which may be made or filed with the Board at, or prior to, the time of said public hearing, and will consider any revisions, amendments or changes to said proposed special assessment roll.

Appearance and protest at this public hearing is required in order to appeal the amount of the proposed special assessment to the Michigan Tax Tribunal. An owner or party in interest or his or her agent may appear in person at this hearing to protest the special assessment or shall be permitted to file his or her appearance to protest by letter received at or before the public hearing. If such letter of protest is filed, personal appearance of the person protesting will not be required.

An owner or person having an interest in the parcel or lot being assessed, who has appeared at the hearing in the manner herein before indicated, may file a written appeal of his or her or its special assessment with the Michigan Tax Tribunal within a maximum of thirty (30) days after confirmation of the special assessment roll by the Township Board.

Antwerp Township will provide necessary, reasonable auxiliary aids and services such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed material being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities at the meeting upon three (3) days' notice to the Township Clerk. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Clerk, Chantel Reyna, at the address or telephone number listed below.

All interested persons are invited to be present at the time and place to submit comments concerning any of the foregoing, or to protest the proposed special assessment roll.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
Chantel Reyna, Clerk
Antwerp Township
24821 Front Avenue
Mattawan, MI 49071
(269) 668-2615

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